East Main Street
Corridor Revitalization Project

June 2015

CDC
ROCHESTER

East Main Street
Corridor Revitalization Project

June 2015 Rochester, New York

Produced by the Community Design Center of Rochester

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Table of Contents

2 Table of Contents

3 Steering Committee Members

4 Introduction

5 Corridor Documentation

- Existing Conditions
- Current Zoning
- Building Usage
- Building Conditions
- Green Amenities

6 Guiding Principles

7 Concept Plan

8 The Public Realm

15 Gateways

20 Connectivity

22 Preserving Existing Buildings

27 New Development

Steering Committee

East Main Street Steering Committee

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Visions Federal Credit Union
Regina Seabrook

Parsells Community Church
Pastor Marlowe Washington

Introduction

The Community Design Center Rochester (CDCR) was engaged by a group of citizens and stakeholders to help develop a conceptual plan for the East Main Street corridor between North Goodman Street and Culver Road. The resulting plan reflects a combination of ideas collected through community and steering committee meetings as well as in the City's Four-step Planning Process completed by Ingalls Planning & Design in 2012. The plan detailed in this report and accompanying maps illustrates community and stakeholder ideas to improve, enhance and transform the East Main Street corridor and is intended to serve as a catalyst for investment, featuring sustainable, well designed development that will benefit and area and the region.

Building on work that has already been done the plan integrates social, environmental and economic assets; identifies opportunities for improvement; offers changes that will reconnect adjacent neighborhoods providing strong linkages to the surrounding city; and serves as a roadmap for future development.

This report is intended as a resource for members of the adjacent neighborhoods as well as residents, business owners and other individual and organizations intending to develop or improve properties in the East Main Street corridor area.

Analysis Mapping

The following pages feature fold out maps that relate information about physical aspects of the built environment along the East Main Street Corridor. These maps, arranged by topic area, help to illustrate the existing conditions along the corridor and the surrounding neighborhood. They are a valuable resource, created from ideas gathered during the community stakeholder planning process and will be used to guide the future development of the East Main Street corridor. The map topics include:

- Existing Conditions
- Current Zoning
- Building Usage
- Building Conditions
- Green Amenities

Garson
Hayward
Railroad
Braggs
Goodman
Minges
Baldwin
Chamberlain
Fraser
Culver
Cedarwood
Laura
Beechwood
Federal
Sidney
Quincy
Arch
Kingston
Main
Circle
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Holmdel
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Leighton
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Base Map
Existing Building
Railroad
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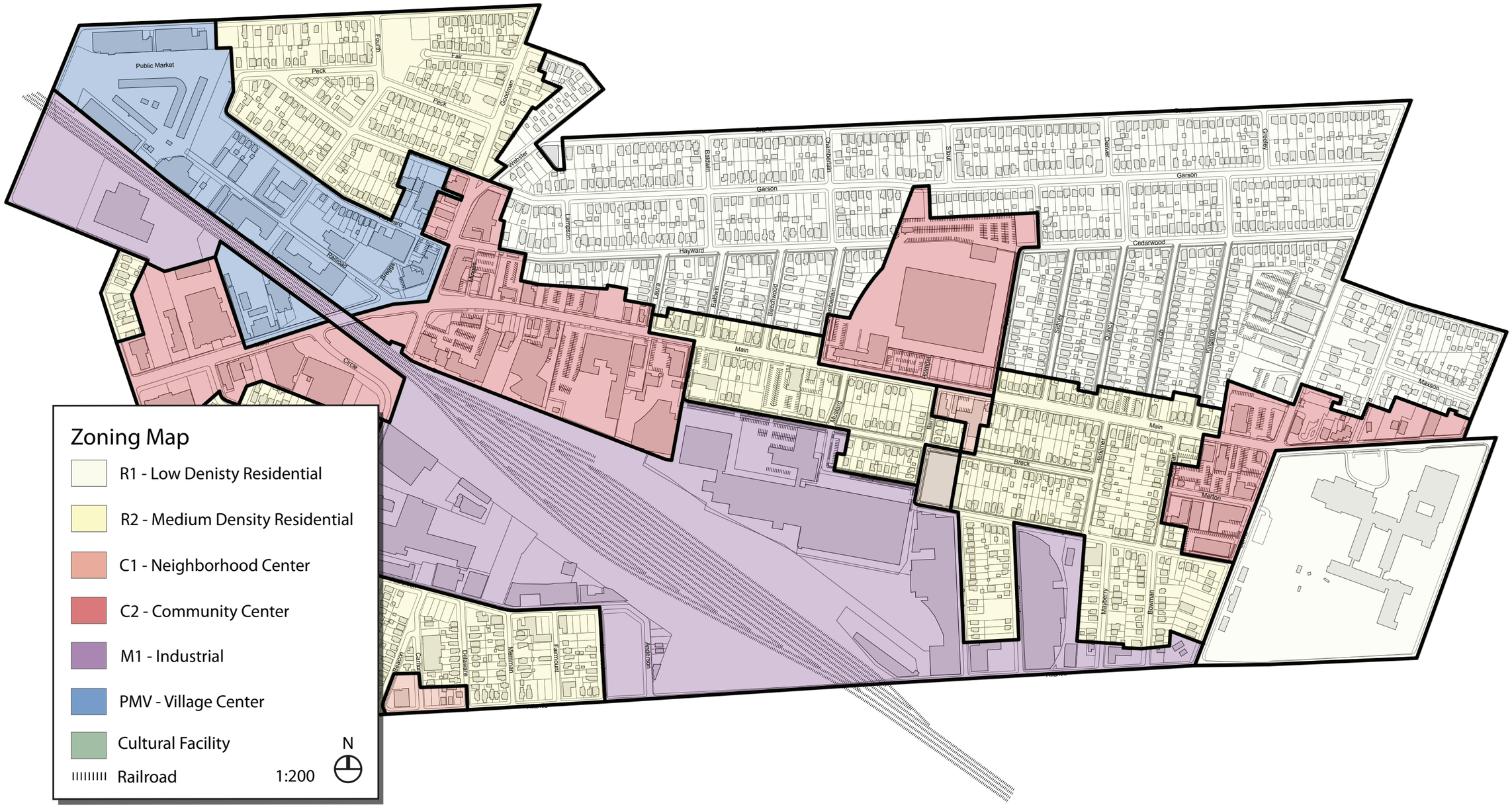

Zoning Map

- R1 - Low Denisty Residential
- R2 - Medium Density Residential
- C1 - Neighborhood Center
- C2 - Community Center
- M1 - Industrial
- PMV - Village Center
- Cultural Facility
- Railroad

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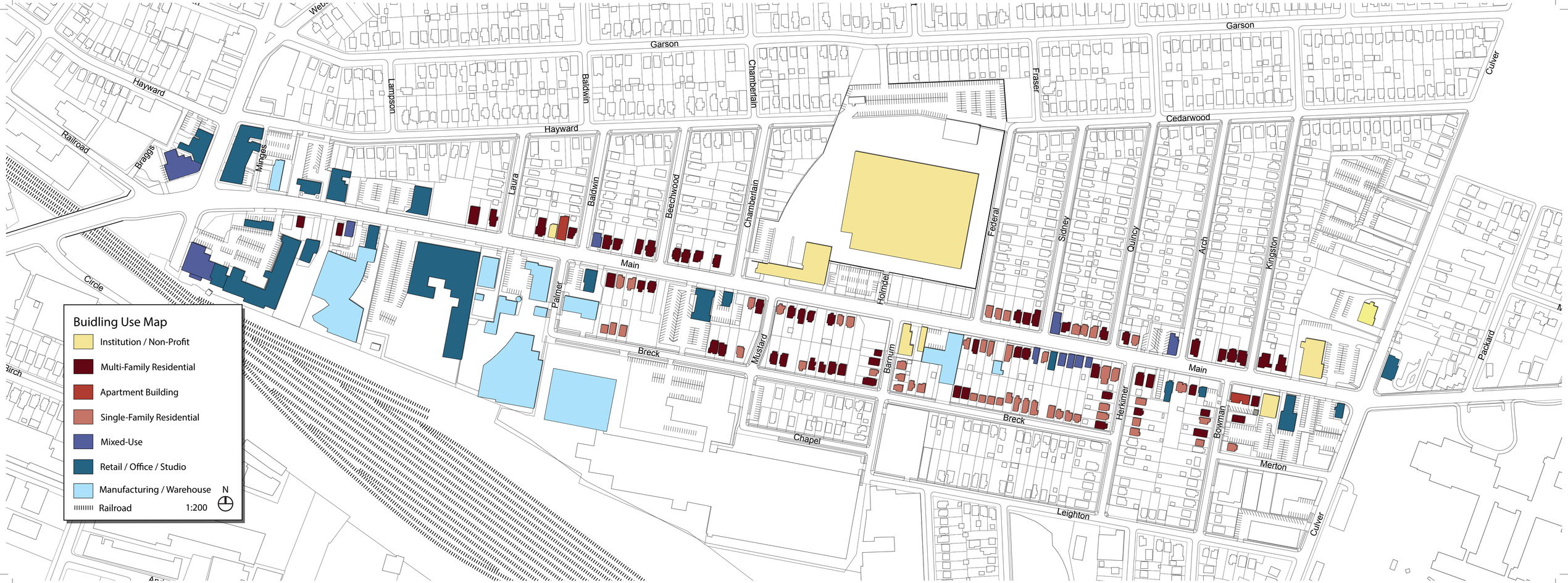
Buidling Use Map
Institution / Non-Profit
Multi-Family Residential
Apartment Building
Single-Family Residential
Mixed-Use
Retail / Office / Studio
Manufacturing / Warehouse
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Chapel
Leighton

Buidling Condition Map
Poor Building Condition
Fair Building Condition
Good Building Condition
Excellent Building Condition
Other Building
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Railroad
Braggs
Mingee
Lampson
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Bowman
Chapel
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Leighton

Green Amenities Map
Vacant Lot
Formal Greenspace / Recreation
Underutilized Open Space
Paved Parking Lot
Existing Tree - Good Condition
Existing Tree - Fair Condition
Existing Tree - Poor Condition
Railroad
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Minges
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Guiding Principles

The following guiding principles provide a framework for the future development of the East Main Street corridor. They were generated by members of the East Main Street Steering Committee, and developed around reoccurring themes that emerged during their meetings and as part of the East Main Street Four-step Planning Process.

1. **Build a sense of Community to encourage Safety and the perception of Safety for all who use the corridor**

2. **Emphasize, Enhance, & Celebrate the corridor Gateways & Transitions**

3. **Discover, Define, & Enhance Community Assets**

4. **Promote the Calming of vehicular traffic & Embrace all modes of Transportation**

5. **Foster standards that Encourage appropriate Economic & Property Development**

Concept Plan

The Concept Plan represents a comprehensive Vision for the revitalization of the East Main Street corridor. It is based on community input gathered during the East Main Street Four-step Planning Process and meetings of the East Main Street Steering Committee. The Plan focuses on the redesign of the streetscape to include several modes of transportation, recommendations for new development, and the revitalization and redevelopment of existing properties. The following pages outline the plan organized around focus areas, highlighting specific interventions along the corridor between Culver Road and North Goodman Street. The focus areas are:

- The Public Realm
- Gateways
- Connectivity
- Preserving Existing Buildings
- New Development

Legend

Existing Tree

Proposed Tree

Existing Buildings

Proposed Development

Driveway & Parking Lot

Sidewalk

Bike Lane / Cycle Track

Crosswalk & Special Pavement

Sculptural Element

Railroad

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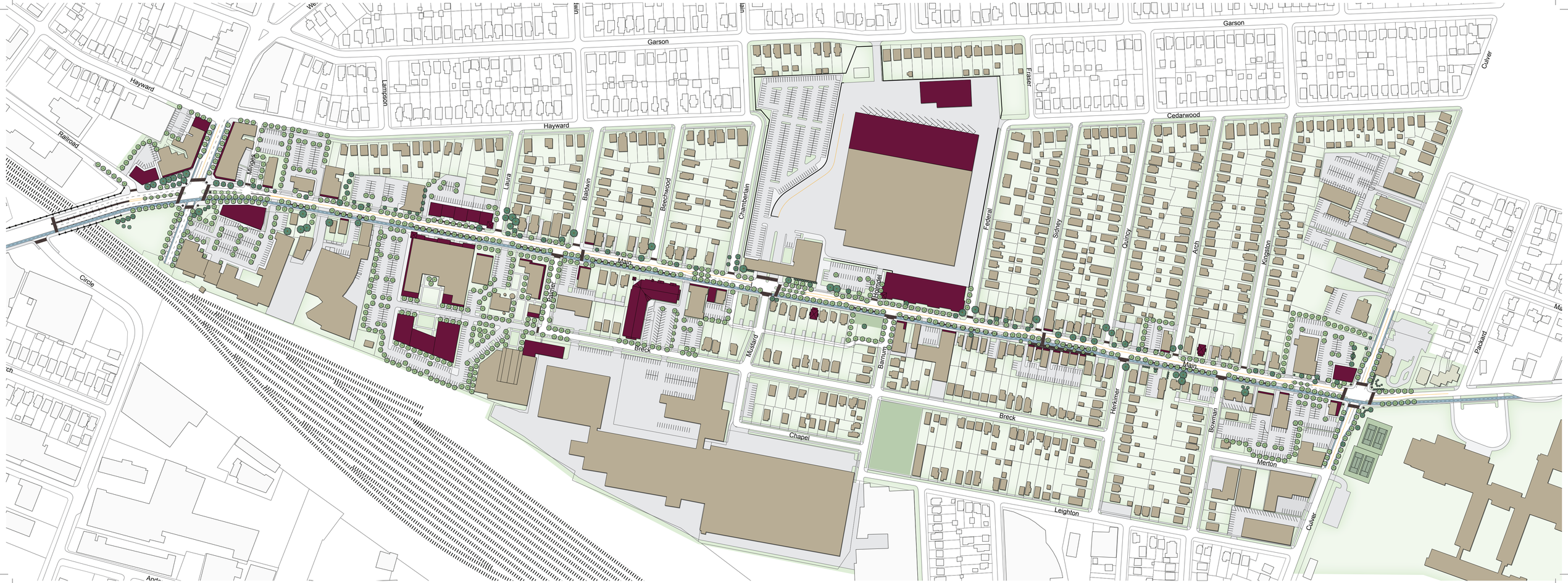
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Chapel
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Bowman
Merton
Leighton
Packard

The Public Realm

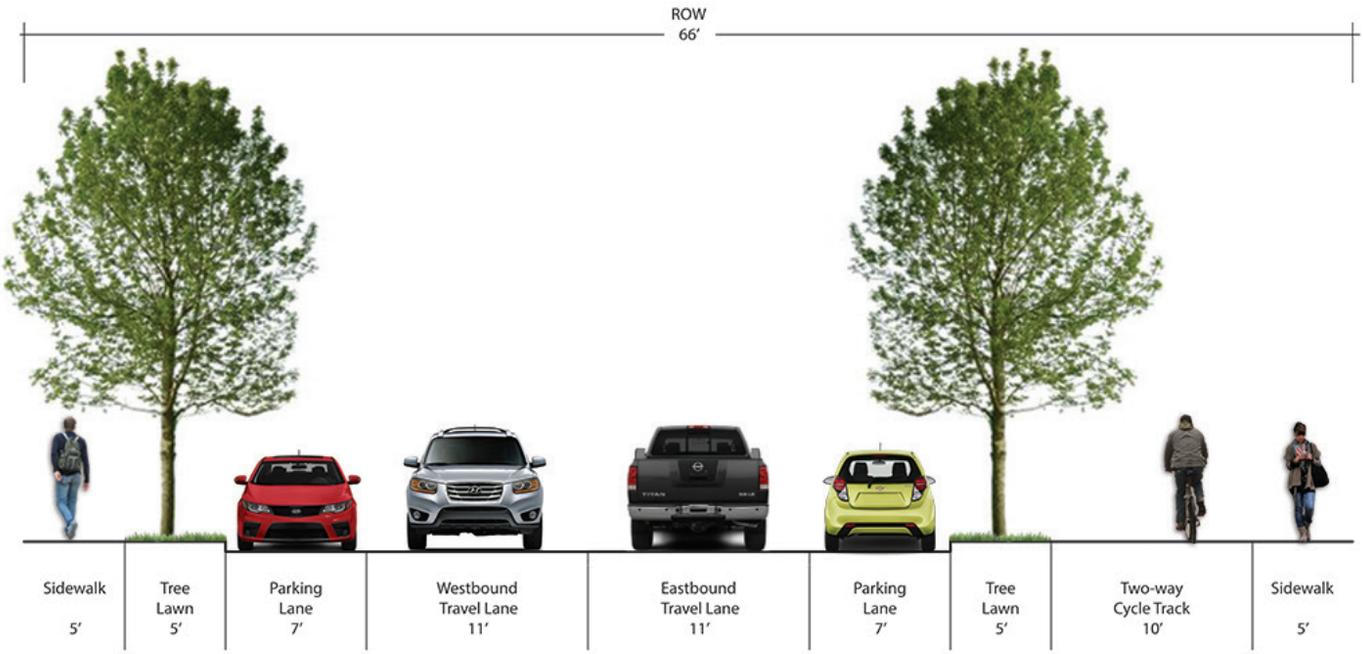
The public realm is generally defined as any space that is publicly owned, including the streets and sidewalks, right-of-ways, parks and open spaces, as well as public/civic buildings or facilities. The quality of the public realm has a considerable impact on the way the community, neighborhood, or corridor functions. Enhancing the public realm will offer a healthy, safe, attractive, and vibrant place for residents and visitors alike. When the public realm is redesigned thoughtfully, it will contribute to the East Main Street Corridor by:

- Fostering community pride;
- Encouraging preservation of the character of the neighborhood and corridor;
- Prioritizing the needs of pedestrians and cyclists;
- Promoting East Main Street as a vibrant and culturally rich district.

The Public Realm

Streetscape

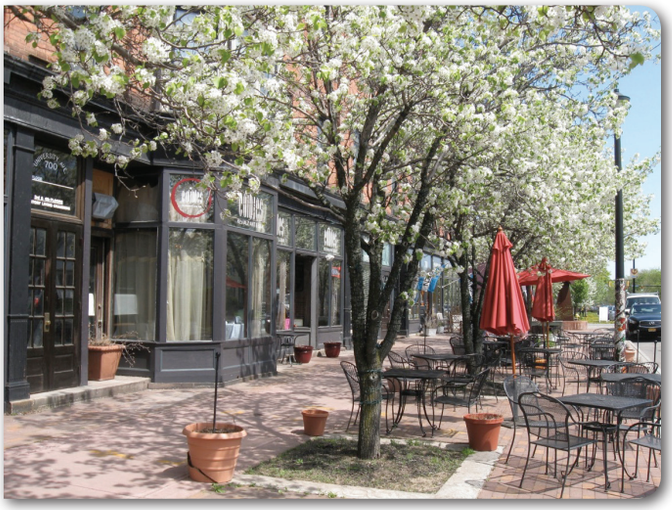
The redesign of the East Main Street streetscape will have a major impact on how the corridor is used by vehicles, pedestrians, cyclists, and for public transportation. The new street design will remove the center lane reducing the width of driving lanes to accommodate tree-lined buffer along the sidewalk and two-cycle track. The cycle track will begin at East High School and run along the south side of the street, continuing through the East Main Arts &Market District, ultimately connecting with the South Union Street cycle track. As a result of multiple driveway curb cuts interfering with the cycle track, alleys are recommended where possible on the south side of the street to help reduce them. Additionally, a total of 155 on-street paring spaces are retained in this plan. Below is an illustration depicting of a typical street section. Variations occur at major intersections and transition points along the corridor.



Sidewalks

For pedestrians sidewalks are a crucial element in a vibrant public realm, acting as a connector of communities. This Plan suggests that sidewalks should be a minimum of 5 feet in width. Areas in front of business clusters could be wider in order to provide ample space to incorporate benches, outdoor café seating, and displays for retail shops. In these areas the sidewalk might feature a different material (color & texture) used to identify special locations throughout the corridor.

Additionally, the plan recommends the incorporation of pedestrian amenities that include enhanced or decorated crossing areas, countdown crossing lights, the use of interesting sidewalk surface materials, and the addition of benches and art installations along the corridor. This range of amenities promotes safety and ease of travel for pedestrians, while contributing the character and attractiveness of the public realm.



Trees & Plantings

Trees and plantings function in a special way to enhance the public realm. They can be used to:

- Help separate pedestrians from vehicular traffic;
- Improve the aesthetic appearance of a district or corridor;
- Provide shade, color and relief;
- Screen parking lots from view;
- Contribute to the natural storm water mitigation system.

The Public Realm

The Concept Plan highly recommends a tree-lined buffer, of at least 5 feet in width, between the street and the sidewalk, to increase pedestrian safety. These areas will increase shade and add to the aesthetic appeal. Flowers and other plants are equally important to the appearance of the public realm. They would enhance gateway signage or to help in screening a parking lot. Similar to banners, the repetition of flower baskets throughout a corridor can help to establish an identity for the corridor. Special types of plants can also be used to create rain gardens and bio-swales along the street or installed in large paved areas to help filter water runoff.

Signage

Signage is a critical element of a vibrant public realm. In addition to guiding navigation and way-finding for pedestrians and motorists, signage also enhances the appearance and helps to promote the identity of a district or corridor.

Banners

When implemented properly banners can be informative and attractive. They can be changed seasonally to promote upcoming events, recognize important local individuals, and

even celebrate various holidays. They are commonly fixed to light posts but can also be retrofitted to be attached to overhead utility poles.

Business Signage

There are many styles of signage for commercial and institutional use. All quality signage should be:

- Attractive and reflect the character of the East Main Street;
- Prominently located over the business entrance;
- Colorful;
- Made of appropriate and high quality materials;
- Easy to read;
- Visible and well-lighted day or night.

It is common for restaurants, bars, and retail shops to put out temporary signs on the sidewalk that highlight daily specials or to promote a sale. This is appropriate as long as they are attractive and constructed with appropriate materials.

The Public Realm

Parking Lot Signs

Parking, and the perceived need is a common concern in most communities. In many cases, reorganization of existing lots and street parking provides ample accommodation. Installing attractive signage that directs people to available parking may provide opportunities for development and green space use while providing reasonable accommodation for vehicles.

Road Signs

The issue of road signage and signals, while necessary, and should be explored as needed in an effort to prevent a visual overload. Too much signage can negatively affect the aesthetic appeal of a community. A thoughtful and effective design of the streetscape and the public realm should provide directional cues to motorists and pedestrians while limiting the amount of overall signage limiting the amount of overall signage used.

VS

Lighting

Lighting is essential to community safety and should be used to enhance visual appeal. The Concept Plan considers two types of lighting: pedestrian and building/signage. Pedestrian lighting should be at a shorter height than street lighting, and typically installed at more frequent intervals along a street. Post top lighting is the most common type and can be designed to enhance the historic character of the corridor. Another common style features a dual headed light in which a taller light is directed towards the street and a shorter light is directed towards the sidewalk. The light poles can be used to hang banners and flower baskets.

Much like the streetlights, building lighting may be used to define a sense of place and to highlight building signage as well as accentuating a building's architectural character. Using appropriate lighting to enhance buildings along East Main Street will contribute positively to the public realm.

Gateways

Gateways are the points of entry to a destination and when they are designed with care, provide a sense of place. This is achieved by incorporating appropriately scaled features including signage, logos, plantings, public art, lighting and other visual cues. The Concept Plan identifies major gateway locations at the intersections of North Goodman Street and Culver Road, as well as the bridge over the railroad corridor. These intersections bookend this distinct section of East Main Street and should be enhanced to attract and welcome people.

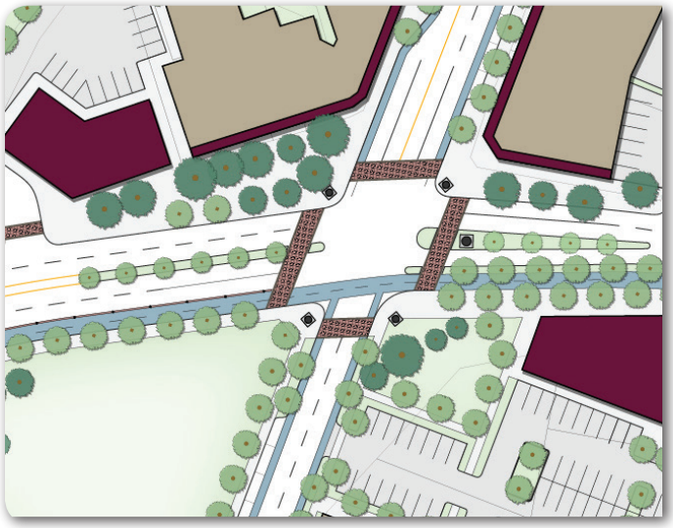
Gateway features should be:

- Attractive and reflect the character of the Village of Lima;
- Prominently located;
- Colorful;
- Easy to read;
- Landscaped;
- Visible and well-lighted day or night.

North Goodman Gateway

Existing Gateway Condition

Proposed Gateway Condition



Proposed Gateway Rendering

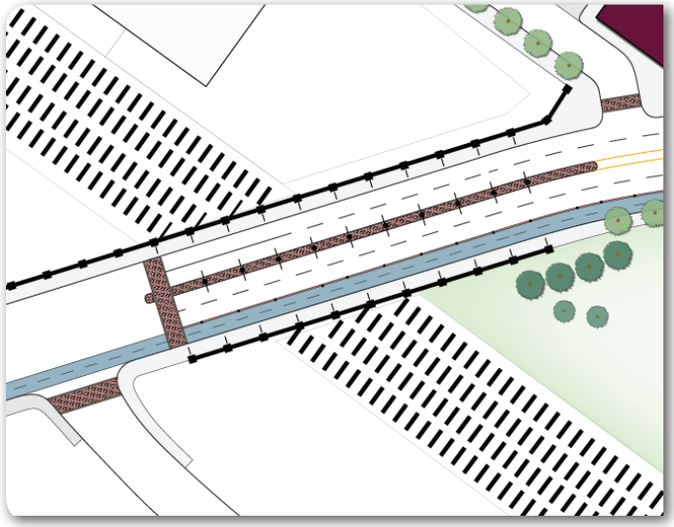
Gateways

Main Street Railroad Overpass

The bridge over the railroad corridor provides an interesting opportunity for an attractive gateway. In addition to a redesign of the streetscape, the bridge might feature banners, median planters, lighting for pedestrians, and bollards protecting the cycle track. Combined these elements will enhance the experience for all who cross the bridge.

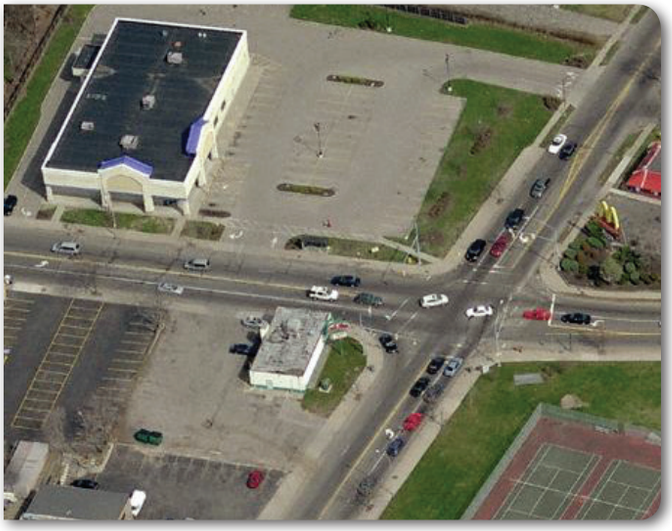
Existing Bridge Condition

Proposed Bridge Condition

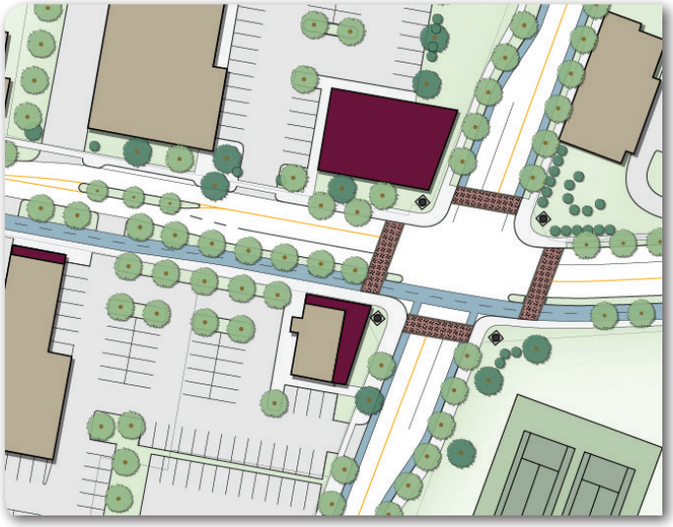


Culver Gateway

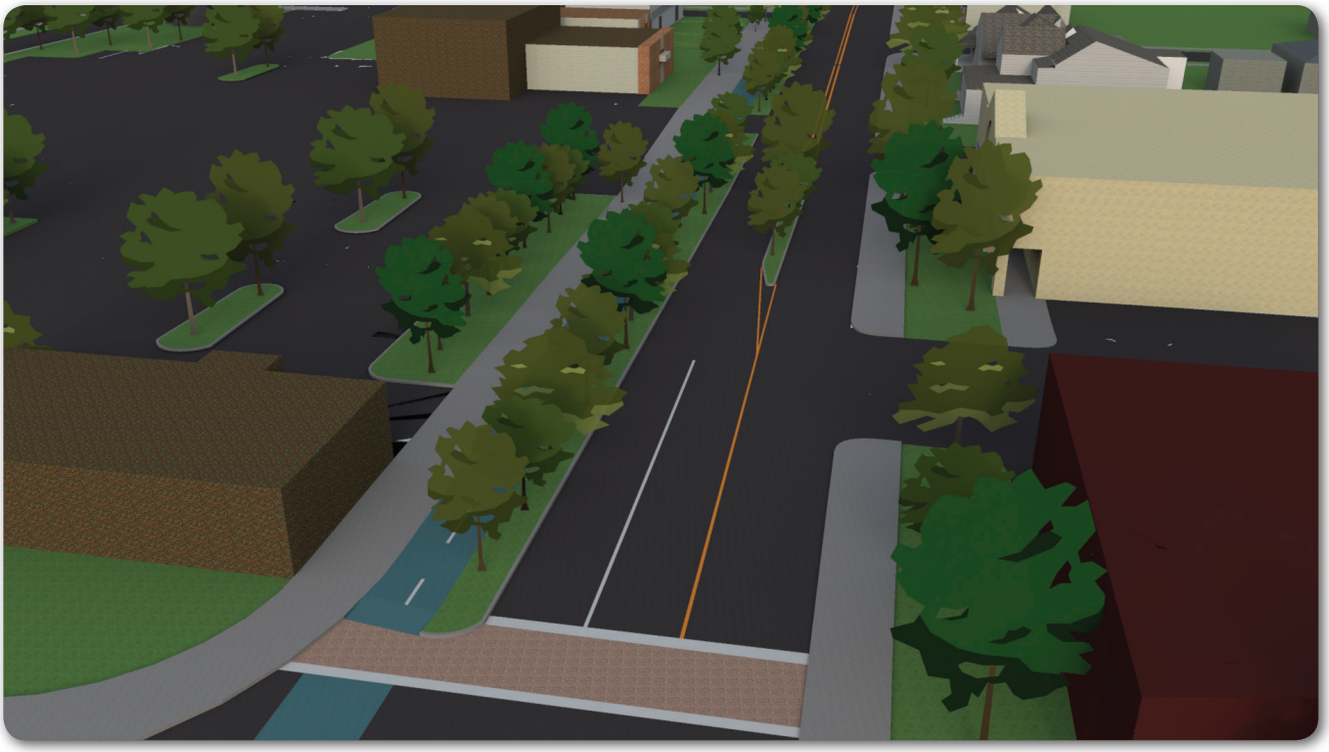
Existing Gateway Condition



Proposed Gateway Condition



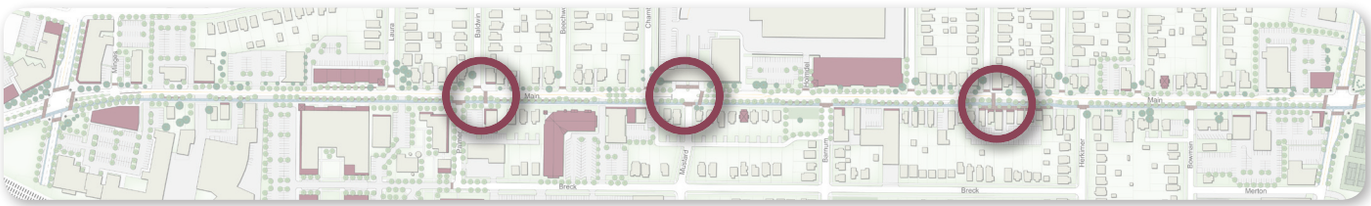
Proposed Gateway Rendering



Gateways

Additionally there are 3 minor gateways, or transition points, along the corridor located at the Mustard Street intersection in front of the Rochester Genesee Regional Transit Authority (RGRTA), the Sidney Street Intersection, and the Baldwin Street Intersection. These locations were selected as transition points and crossing areas because of their location next to RGRTA bus stops and corner stores. These locations should feature enhanced crosswalks, sending cues to drivers that pedestrians will be using them to cross the road. Due to the increased amount of bus traffic at the RGRTA facility a center median with a crossing refuge is recommended. This will provide a protected area for pedestrians to pause while crossing the corridor making it safer for senior citizens and children.

Transition Point Location Map



Proposed Transition Point Conditions

It is important to recognize that the corridor itself is a gateway into Rochester's Downtown. While traveling from the Culver Road intersection towards Downtown, there should be a sense of approach to someplace special. This can be accomplished by designing the public realm to feature street trees and banners, and through the increased formality of the streetscape design in general.

Connectivity

East Main Street is a barrier because it physically separates the Beechwood and EMMA neighborhoods. The existing conditions favor vehicular traffic and discourage pedestrians, cyclists and other modes of transportation. The Plan addresses this division by incorporating and promoting a streetscape design that encourages multi-modal transportation and helps to connect the two neighborhoods.

This is accomplished by:

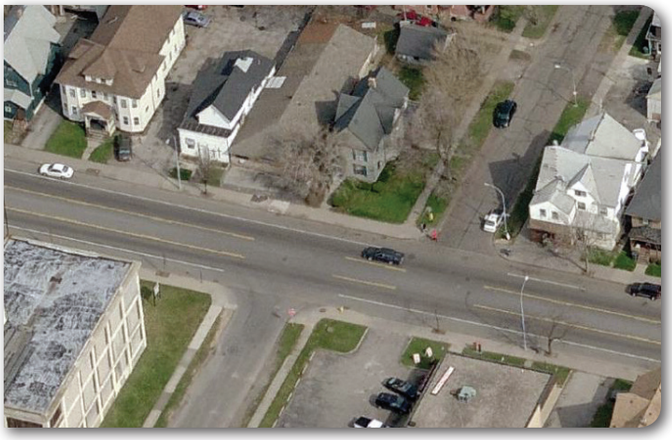
- Narrowing the width of travel & parking lanes;
- Providing a tree-lined buffer between pedestrians and vehicles;
- Incorporating a dedicated cycle track on the south side of the street;
- Improving crossing locations with enhanced crosswalks and areas of refuge;
- Incorporating variations in the street sections to calm traffic.

Connectivity

North/ South

Part of the separation between the Beechwood and EMMA neighborhoods is due to the lack of aligned thru-streets that cross East Main Street. This is an issue, particularly for pedestrians that have difficulty crossing the street since there is only one existing designated crosswalk between the Culver Road and North Goodman Street. Providing safe crossing locations will increase pedestrian safety and mobility across East Main Street.

Existing Offset Street



Proposed Safe Crossing

East/West

East Main Street is a gateway corridor that strongly caters to vehicular traffic. The incorporation of a cycle track that connects to the Downtown will make East Main Street an important travel corridor for more that just vehicles. Designing the street to accommodate other forms of transportation will promote foot and bicycle traffic, increasing access and making the corridor an attractive destination for residents and businesses.

Cycle Track Route

Preserving Existing Buildings

East Main Street has a rich social and architectural history. The surrounding neighborhoods boast an intact and well-kept housing stock. There are several buildings on East Main Street that are in need of a face-lift. Appropriately designed and well-maintained building facades can greatly enhance the aesthetic and economic viability of a community or commercial corridor. When designed thoughtfully, and with consideration to the surrounding context, they will improve the quality of the architectural edge and the public realm. Conversely, when left to disrepair or designed inappropriately, they damage the visual appearance of the area. The improvement of building facades along East Main Street will enhance the overall appearance while promoting the preservation and reuse of existing buildings for use for new commercial entities.

Façade improvement recommendations are noted on the plan by a thin a maroon edge along the front of the building. The following are a few locations where façade improvements could have a great impact aesthetically and economically.

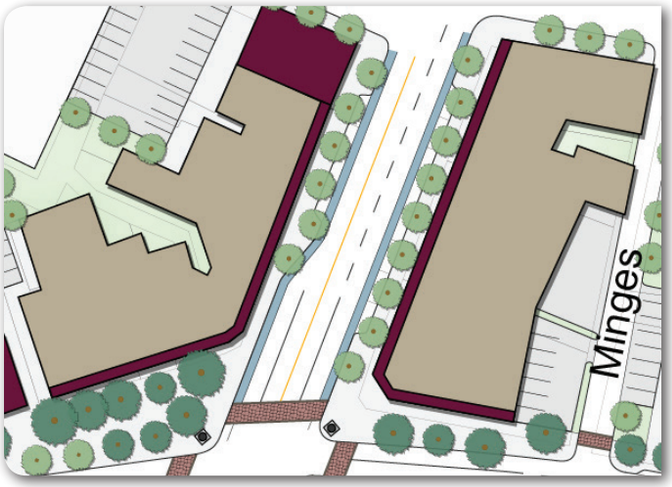
Preserving Existing Buildings

North Goodman Street Gateway

The existing buildings located around the North Goodman Street intersection offer commercial and mixed-use opportunities. With appropriate updates to the building facades, these semi-vacant storefronts could once again become a vibrant gateway and commercial node.

Existing Facade Conditions

Proposed Site Map

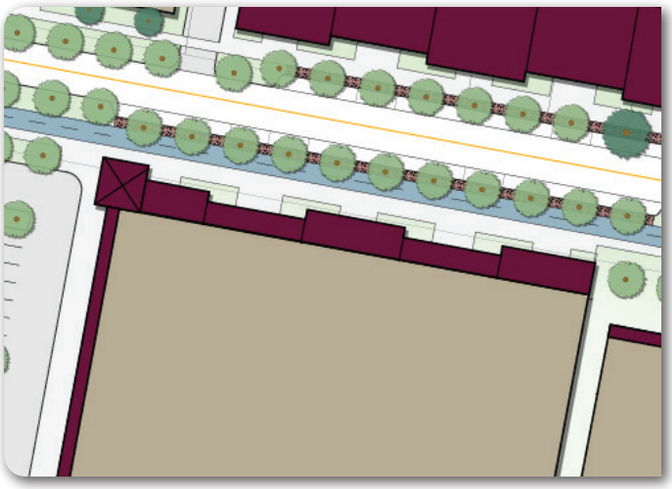


Greenovation Building

The front of the Greenovation Building is a blank canvas, with its uninterrupted brick façade, set back approximately 30 feet from the sidewalk. The interior of the building is open and flexible and with some creative design the façade could be divided and opened up into several smaller storefronts. The large setback would become an asset providing ample space for outdoor seating, displays, and plantings.

Existing Facade Conditions

Proposed Site Map



Transition Point Corner Stores

Two locations have been identified as transition points and are located on corners, with a building that has a market on the first floor and residential apartments above. These areas have been recommended as the location for enhanced pedestrian crosswalks. To further enhance these locations it is recommended that the buildings also receive façade improvements.

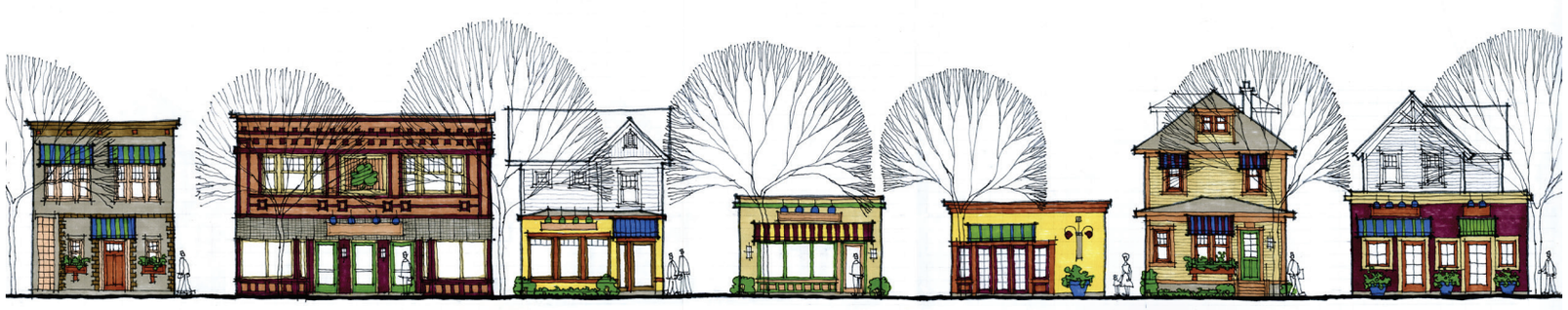
Existing Corner Store

Corner Store Example

Commercial Cluster

While documenting the corridor a major asset was identified, a commercial cluster located between Herkimer and Barnum Streets. This cluster features 7 storefront or attached storefront buildings. With some minor façade improvements, combined with the street section variation, this could become a vibrant gathering place.

Schematic Elevation

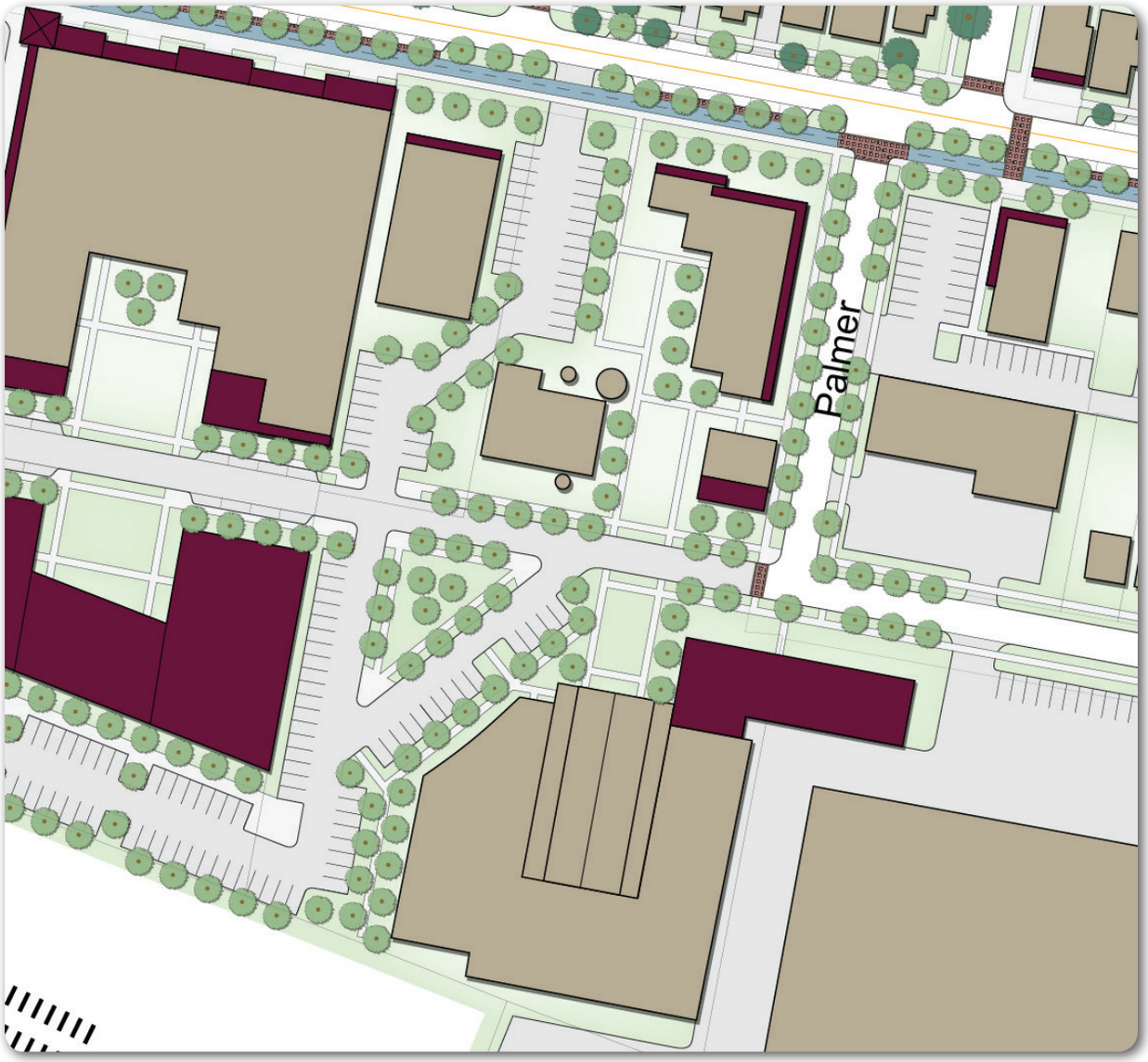


Preserving Existing Buildings

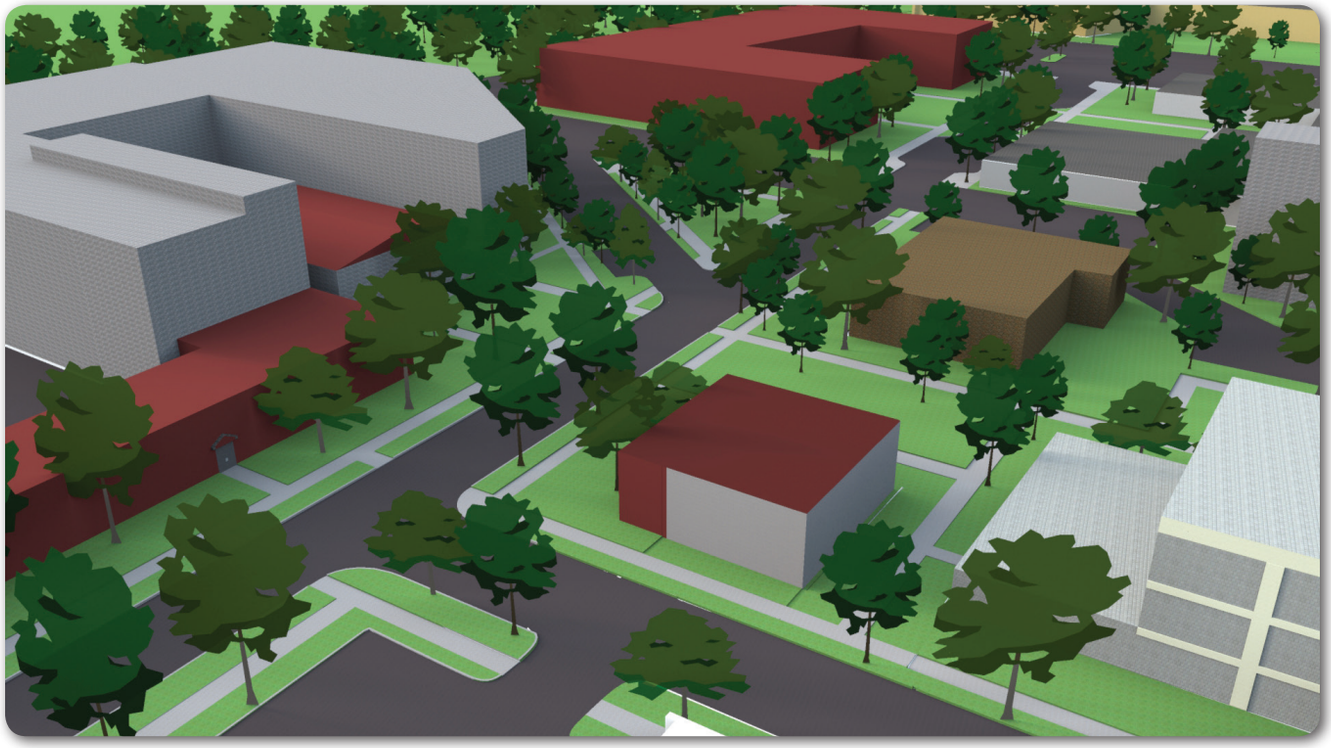
Beechnut Factory Site

The redevelopment of the Beechnut factory site has the potential to be a premiere mixed-use center on East Main Street and in the City of Rochester. In addition to façade and site improvements, interior renovations would offer residential, office and retail spaces. A reorganization of parking and street/pedestrian connections will maximize the site efficiency as well as provide ample greenspace. Existing factory amenities, such as the smoke stacks, can be refurbished and provide a unique theme to the development. Additionally, its location on the cycle track will make it an attractive destination and residence for cyclists.

Proposed Site Map



Proposed Site Rendering



Hillside Family of Agencies

In conjunction with a new development on the site to the west, the Hillside building located at 1337 East Main Street is slated to undergo redevelopment. In addition to a new façade, the current interior programming will accommodate 23 residential units and an ground floor café.

Existing Building Condition

Proposed Site Map

New Development

The architectural edge is an important element that the public realm. Where buildings have been removed or have a large setback it is critical to replace the "missing teeth" and reestablish that edge. Additionally vacant lots and other development sites provide opportunities for new residential, commercial and mixed use buildings. When these new developments are designed appropriately and with consideration to the context of the surrounding neighborhood, they will increase the aesthetic and viability of the corridor. Along the East Main Street corridor there are five locations where new infill developments are recommended.

Hungerford Complex Site

Currently the building located in from of the Hungerford complex is a one-story suburban style retail building, with parking out front. This site offers the opportunity to develop a special flatiron gateway building. In addition to reestablishing the architectural edge it can provide residences for artists with studio space in the Hungerford Building and also retail space for those businesses that might have outgrown their studios. With the development of this building, the entire site can be redesigned to maximize parking and open spaces.

Existing Site Conditions

Proposed Site Map

1200 E Main Street Brownfield

1200 East Main Street is a brownfield clean up site that has been prepped for new development. The two adjacent sites to the east contain vacant and dilapidated structures that could also be removed to create a larger development site. The plan recommends that a 2-3 story mixed use building be constructed that would mirror the façade enhancement to the Greenovation building on the south side of the street. There would be 35 allocated parking spots for tenants and visitors behind the building.

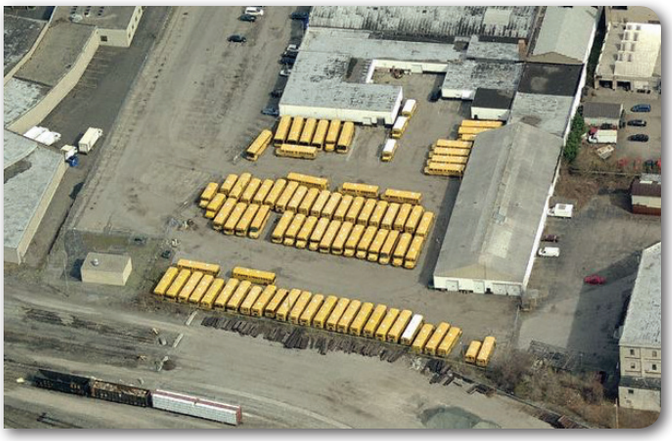
Existing Site Condition

Proposed Site Map

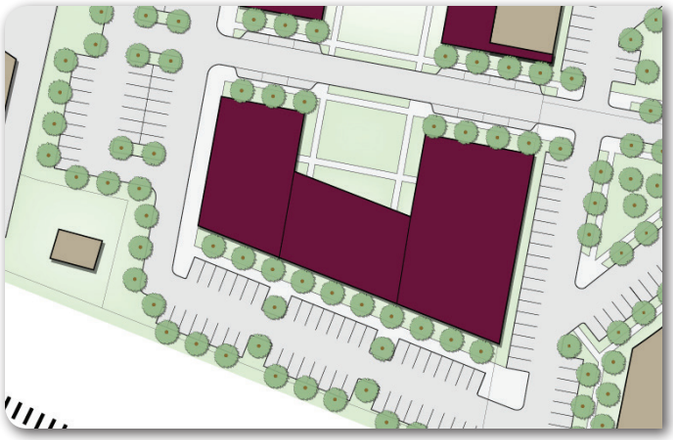
Greenovation Site (Rear)

In addition to the improvements to the front of the Greenovation building, we are recommending new development in the back of the site. Currently the site is used for school bus parking and maintenance but could be developed as professional office space or a potential location for a charter school. The redesign of the site would increase parking efficiency and also provide a street connection to the adjacent Beechnut factory site.

Existing Site Condition

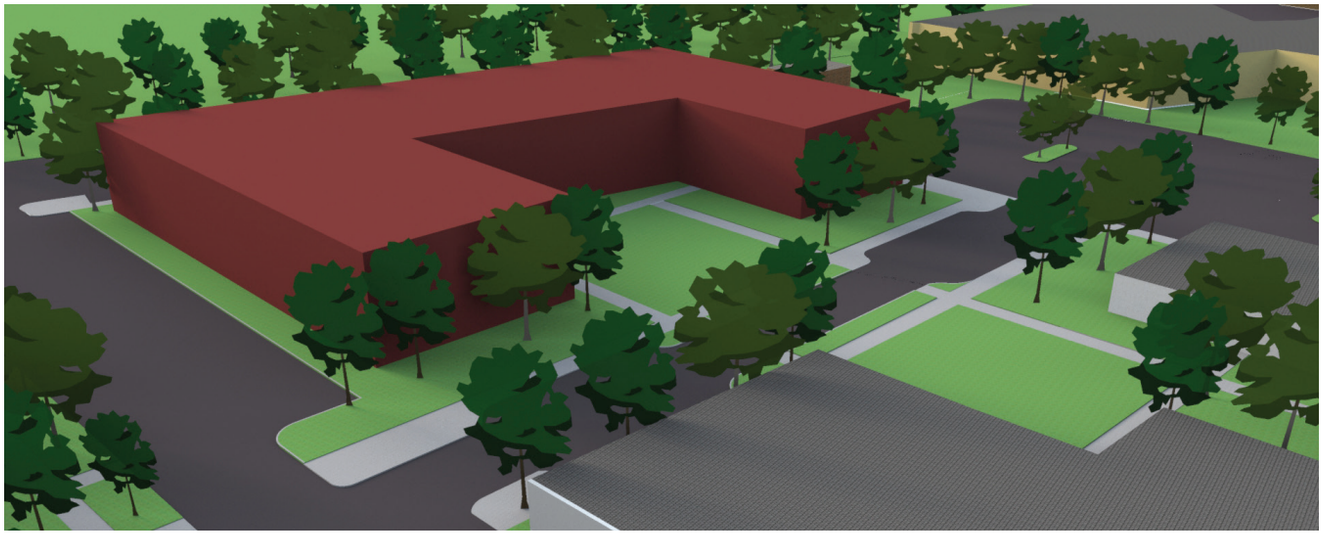


Proposed Site Map



New Development

Proposed Site Rendering

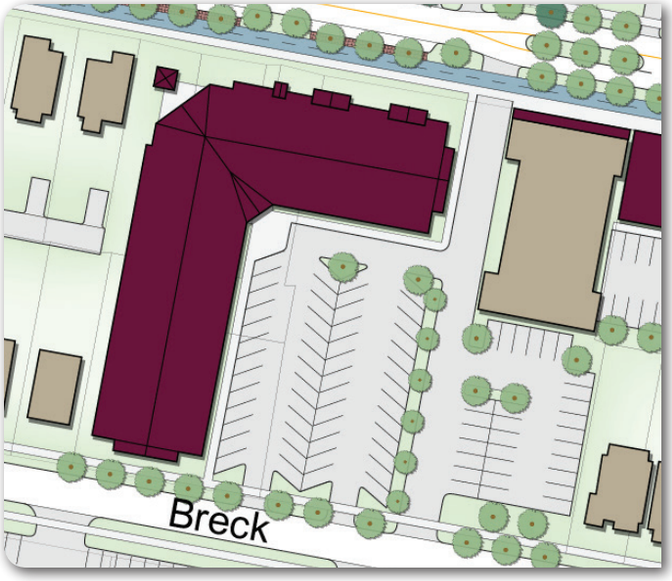


Hillside Apartments

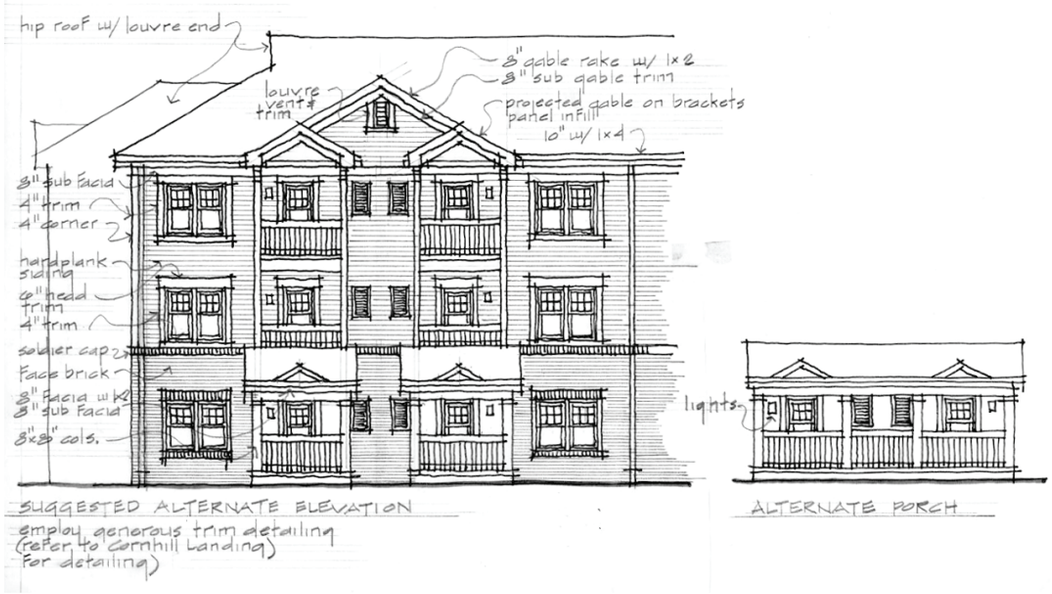
The site adjacent to the existing Hillside Family of Agencies Building is slated for a 30,00sqft residential development the 3-story structure will occupy space on the existing parking lot and require the acquisition of two residential lots to the east. The current plan would accommodate 79 residential units with parking in the rear. It is recommended that the front façade incorporate porches to emulate existing houses along the corridor. The northeast corner of the site will be an outdoor seating area with a gazebo like structure to hold the corner of the building.

Existing Site Condition

Proposed Site Map



Proposed Facade Elevation

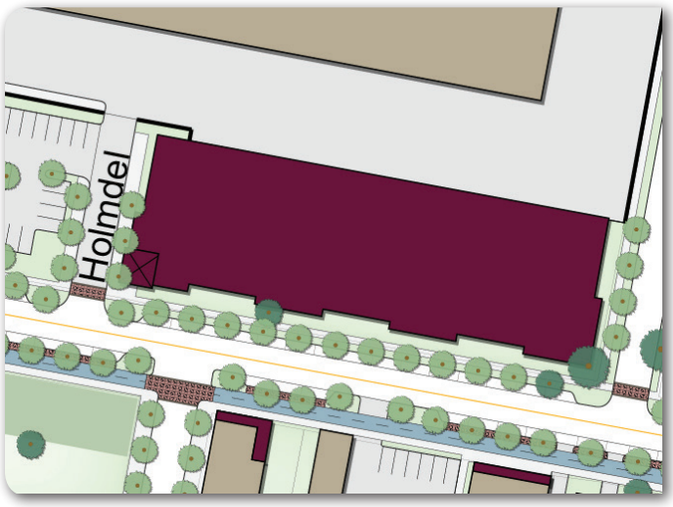


RGRTA Development Site

The Rochester Genesee Regional Transit Authority is planning an expansion of their facilities on East Main Street. The plan calls for the demolition of dozen homes and the development of multiple maintenance/ storage buildings. Current renderings of the development along East Main Street depict a long blank façade. This plan recommend breaking the façade up with display windows to feature historic corridor images or local artwork. It is also suggested that a historic bus, which will be stored in the building, be prominently displayed.

Existing Site Conditions

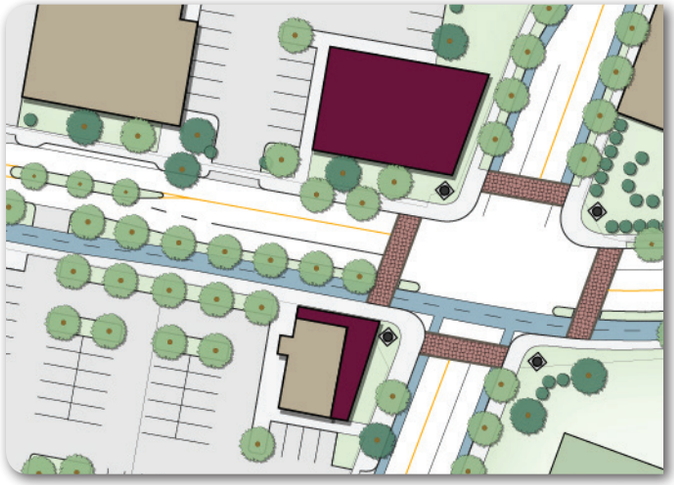
Proposed Site Map



New Development

Culver Road Intersection

The Culver Road intersection faces the issue of large building setbacks. New development closer to the corners will help define the intersection and help enhance it as a gateway. However, where a building is not appropriate, neighborhood signage or sculptural elements can be used.

Existing Site Conditions

Proposed Site Map